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THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

NIC #2059-83
16 March 1983

National Intelligence Council

MEMORANDUM FOR: John N. McMahon
Acting Director of Central Intelligence

FROM : Major General Edward B. Atkeson, USA
National Intelligence Officer for General Purpose Forces

SUBJECT : DCI Worldwide Briefings []

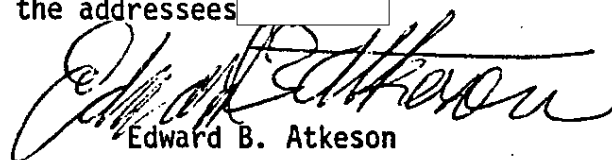
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1. Since completion of the Director's series of Worldwide Briefings before Congress and the PFIAB, it has become apparent that some of the data used in the presentations may have been incorrect or misleading. The T-80 tank was identified by the Community less than a month before the briefings began, and there was little indication at the time of any significant differences of views regarding the vehicle. Since then, questions have been raised, most notably by the Army's Foreign Science and Technology Center, about T-80 interior design and sub-system capabilities. FSTC now takes exception to CIA's assessment that the tank has a missile-firing capability. Similarly, the Office of Imagery Analysis is reexamining the question of maximum possible turret armor thickness, and new Community consensus could emerge as new facts are brought to light. []

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2. The attached letters to the Chairmen of the Committees briefed alert the recipients to the inaccuracies and report the action which the Community is taking to reconcile its differences. I recommend that you sign the letters and forward them to the addressees []

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Edward B. Atkeson

Attachments:
Letters from Acting DCI to:
C/SASC
C/HASC
C/SFRC
C/PFIAB

cc: C/NIC

CL BY SIGNER
DECL OADRDCI
EXEC
REG

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Approved For Release 2008/01/03 : CIA-RDP91B00135R000200350033-7

MEMORANDUM FOR: John N. McMahon
Acting DCI

FROM : NIO/GPF

SUBJECT : DCI Worldwide Briefings

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Distribution:

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The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

Executive Registry

83-1504

Representative Melvin Price
Chairman, House Committee on Armed Services
Room 2110, Rayburn House Office Building
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

21 MAR 1983

Dear Representative Price:

During the Director's Worldwide Briefing before your committee on February 16, 1983, the National Intelligence Officer for General Purpose Forces, General Atkeson, outlined certain characteristics and capabilities of the new Soviet T-80 tank about which we now have some doubts. He ascribed to the tank a missile-firing capability for greater accuracy at extended ranges. While we still believe this to be true, it should be noted that technical questions have recently come to light about this, and there is not unanimity of view on the point within the Intelligence Community. Similarly, he indicated that the frontal armor of the vehicle could defeat all anti-tank weapons presently deployed with US troops. This is probably incorrect. While aspects of this question are also under review, the weight of evidence now in hand indicates that the Improved TOW can be lethal to the T-80, even if delivered against the frontal armor. [REDACTED]

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It should be noted that our information on the T-80 is incomplete and that our assessments remain tentative for the time being. The Director has asked for a comprehensive review of the entire Soviet armor/anti-armor problem by the Intelligence Community this spring. Results of the review are scheduled to be published as a two-volume Interagency Intelligence Memorandum in the third quarter of the year. [REDACTED]

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Sincerely,

/s/ John N. McMahon

John N. McMahon
Acting Director

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Washington, D. C. 20505

Executive Registry

83-1504/1

Senator John G. Tower
Chairman, Senate Committee on Armed Services
Room 142, Russell Senate Office Building
Constitution Avenue between Delaware Avenue
and 1st Street, S.E.
Washington, DC 20510

21 MAR 1983

Dear Senator Tower:

During the Director's Worldwide Briefing before your committee on February 16, 1983, the National Intelligence Officer for General Purpose Forces, General Atkeson, outlined certain characteristics and capabilities of the new Soviet T-80 tank about which we now have some doubts. He ascribed to the tank a missile-firing capability for greater accuracy at extended ranges. While we still believe this to be true, it should be noted that technical questions have recently come to light about this, and there is not unanimity of view on the point within the Intelligence Community. Similarly, he indicated that the frontal armor of the vehicle could defeat all anti-tank weapons presently deployed with US troops. This is probably incorrect. While aspects of this question are also under review, the weight of evidence now in hand indicates that the Improved TOW can be lethal to the T-80, even if delivered against the frontal armor [redacted] 25X1

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Sincerely,

/s/ John N. McMahon

John N. McMahon
Acting Director

CL BY SIGNER
DECL OADR

SECRET [redacted]



The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

Executive Registry

83-1504/2

Senator Charles H. Percy
Chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
Room 4321, Dirksen Senate Office Building
Constitution Avenue between 1st Street
and 2nd Street, N.E.
Washington, DC 20510

21 MAR 1983

Dear Senator Percy:

During the Director's Worldwide Briefing before your committee on March 3, 1983, the National Intelligence Officer for General Purpose Forces, General Atkeson, outlined certain characteristics and capabilities of the new Soviet T-80 tank about which we now have some doubts. He ascribed to the tank a missile-firing capability for greater accuracy at extended ranges. While we still believe this to be true, it should be noted that technical questions have recently come to light about this, and there is not unanimity of view on the point within the Intelligence Community. Similarly, he indicated that the frontal armor of the vehicle could defeat all anti-tank weapons presently deployed with US troops. This is probably incorrect. While aspects of this question are also under review, the weight of evidence now in hand indicates that the Improved TOW can be lethal to the T-80, even if delivered against the frontal armor. []

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Sincerely,

/s/ John N. McMahon

John N. McMahon
Acting Director

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The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

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Executive Registry

83-1504/3

21 MAR 1983

Ambassador Anne Armstrong
Chairwoman, President's Foreign
Intelligence Advisory Board
Room 340, Old Executive Office Building
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Ambassador Armstrong:

During the Director's Worldwide Briefing before your board on March 10, 1983, the National Intelligence Officer for General Purpose Forces, General Atkeson, outlined certain characteristics and capabilities of the new Soviet T-80 tank about which we now have some doubts. He ascribed to the tank a missile-firing capability for greater accuracy at extended ranges. While we still believe this to be true, it should be noted that technical questions have recently come to light about this, and there is not unanimity of view on the point within the Intelligence Community. Similarly, he indicated that the frontal armor of the vehicle could defeat all anti-tank weapons presently deployed with US troops. This is probably incorrect. While aspects of this question are also under review, the weight of evidence now in hand indicates that the Improved TOW can be lethal to the T-80, even if delivered against the frontal armor. [REDACTED]

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Sincerely,

/s/ John N. McMahon

John N. McMahon
Acting Director



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